AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim ~~1~~ 20 wherein the first set of the at least three concave surfaces of the needle end are obliquely arranged relative to the longitudinal axis at a first angle.

3. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim 2 wherein the second set of the at least three concave surfaces of the needle tip are obliquely arranged relative to the longitudinal axis at a second angle greater than the first angle.

4. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim ~~1~~ 3 further including cutting edges disposed along respective lines of intersection of the first set of at least three concave surfaces of the needle end with the second set of at least three concave surfaces of the needle tip.

5. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim 4 wherein the first set ~~needle end~~ includes four intersecting concave surfaces.

6. (Original) The surgical needle according to claim 5 wherein the needle end defines a generally diamond-shape in cross-section along an axis transverse to the longitudinal axis.

7. (Original) The surgical needle according to claim 6 wherein the needle end defines a maximum cross-sectional dimension greater than a corresponding maximum cross-sectional dimension of the main shaft.

8. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim ~~1~~ 4 wherein the second set ~~needle tip~~ includes four intersecting concave surfaces.

9. (Original) The surgical needle according to claim 8 wherein the needle tip defines a generally diamond-shape in cross-section along an axis transverse to the longitudinal axis.

10. (Original) The surgical needle according to claim 1 wherein the main shaft is curved along the longitudinal axis of the needle body.

11. (Original) The surgical needle according to 1 wherein the main shaft includes means for attaching a suture.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim ~~12~~ 23 wherein the at least three non-linear surfaces of the ~~needle end~~ first set define cutting edges along lines of intersection of adjacent surfaces thereof.

14. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim ~~12~~ 13 wherein the at least three non-linear surfaces of the ~~needle tip~~ second set define cutting edges along lines of intersection of adjacent surfaces thereof.

15. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim 14 wherein the at least three non-linear intersecting surfaces of the ~~needle end~~ first set and the at least three non-linear intersecting surfaces of the ~~needle tip~~ second set define respective cutting edges along lines of intersection thereof.

16. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim 15 wherein the ~~needle end~~ first set includes four non-linear surfaces.

17. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim 16 wherein the ~~needle tip~~ second set includes four non-linear surfaces.

18. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim 17 wherein the four non-linear surfaces of each of the ~~needle end~~ first set and the ~~needle tip~~ second set are generally concave.

19. (Currently Amended) The surgical needle according to claim ~~12~~ 23 wherein the at least three non-linear surfaces of each of the ~~needle end~~ first set and the ~~needle tip~~ second set are generally concave.

20. (New) A surgical needle, which comprises:

an elongated needle body defining a longitudinal axis and proximal and distal ends, the elongated needle body including a main shaft adjacent the proximal end, a needle end adjacent the main shaft, and a needle tip extending distally from the needle end and having an extreme needle point, the needle end including a first distinct set of at least three generally concave intersecting surfaces extending between the needle tip and the main shaft, the needle tip including a second distinct set of at least three generally concave intersecting surfaces extending between the needle point and the needle end to intersect the first set of concave surfaces of the needle end.

21. (New) The surgical needle of claim 20 wherein the at least three concave surfaces of the first set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis and wherein the at least three concave surfaces of the second set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis.

22. (New) The surgical needle of claim 8 wherein the concave surfaces of the first set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis and wherein the concave surfaces of the second set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis.

23. (New) A surgical needle, which comprises:

an elongated needle body defining a longitudinal axis and proximal and distal ends, the elongated needle body including a main shaft adjacent the proximal end, a first distinct set of at least three non-linear intersecting surfaces distally extending from the main shaft and a second distinct set of at least three non-linear intersecting surfaces contiguous with the first set of at least three non-linear intersecting surfaces and extending distally therefrom to an extreme distal needle point.

24. (New) The surgical needle of claim 23 wherein the at least three non-linear intersecting surfaces of the first set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis and wherein the at least three non-linear intersecting surfaces of the second set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis.

25. (New) The surgical needle of claim 18 wherein the four non-linear surfaces of the first set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis and wherein the four non-linear surfaces of the second set are symmetrically arranged about the longitudinal axis.